

SOILS and CROPS

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Layers May Be Show Birds.

Some people have the erroneous idea that a well-bred or prize-winning fowl is not a good laying one, but they may be if properly bred. For instance, I had a pullet a few years ago from which my present strain originated. This pullet commenced to lay early and I wished to show her at our Barred Plymouth Rock Show. She laid in the crate both going to and coming from the show, as well as in the coop while at the show, and kept it up after returning home, besides winning first in her class and special for best color Barred Plymouth Rock female in the show. This in spite of the fact that changing living quarters usually stops hens laying.

Nature itself is one of our greatest allies in producing a heavy egg-laying strain in poultry when aided with a little common sense in mating. Take, for instance, a cow with great milk-producing traits will not produce, under normal conditions, any more calves in a given time than one that gives very little milk. With poultry this is different.

Nature has so arranged it that the chicken comes from the egg and we should naturally expect to get the most chicks from the hen that lays the most eggs, while a poor layer will leave fewer of her kind and blood in the flock and by careful selections made from these heavy-laying birds one can very easily build up a heavy-laying flock.

In making my selections for breeders I also take particular care to use only early-maturing birds that are sturdy, vigorous, active and healthy. I cull my flock early, selling for market all that are slow maturing and have other defects, retaining as breeders only the most desirable specimens.

However, just because a bird is bred to lay will not make her lay any more than a cow will make a record for milk production if she is neglected. They both require proper feed and care and one of the most important is something we all must have near at hand and that is pure fresh water.

In breeding for exhibition Barred Plymouth Rocks, we have to make two different matings. These we call the light color and the dark color mating, and while they are both Barred Plymouth Rocks they are bred as separate as though they were different breeds.

I am mentioning this because I have found from my own experience that the light color mating lay the best and I would suggest that all breeders of one large flock for market purposes only, use the light color mating. They dress nicer also, and have richer yellow shanks and skin.

Twenty Points on Hogs and Bacon Markets.

Here are twenty points which outline the present position and the main requirements of the markets for Canadian hogs:

1. Select bacon hogs must weigh between 160 and 210 lbs., at the packing plants (170-220 lbs. on the farm).
2. Very little more than one-half of the hogs now being marketed within the weight-limit to yield exportable "Wiltshire sides".
3. There is only a very limited market for the fat, lard-type of hog in

Poultry

Everybody who has a few good fowls in his breeding pens can profit by showing them. Whether you raised them yourself or bought them off some other breeder, you will never know just how good they are in comparison with your neighbors' fowls unless you show them.

If you purchased your exhibition stock, depending entirely on the past records of the birds or the say-so of the man selling them, it will pay you to make a careful study point by point in comparing your birds with the ones shown against you. Ask the judge to show you the strong and weak points in your birds, and he will usually give you a lot of valuable pointers.

We have often run across people in the show-room who were there for the first time. They started with a setting of eggs for which they paid a good price and from which they expected a lot of high-class show birds. They should begin the study and culling these birds when still small chicks and watch them until ready for show-room. Fix your ideal in mind and constantly select the ones that have developed the most nearly that ideal.

We always give first place to birds nearest standard shape. Breeders place color first, but it is generally admitted that "color makes the bird" while shape makes the breed. Also observe the bird's points carefully, for nothing catches the judge's eye quicker than a shaped head with good eyes, combed wattles. See that the birds are properly conditioned for the show. For condition is half the success.

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